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CLOVIS MAN CONVICTED BY JURY OF TWENTY-TWO COUNTS
OF DEFRAUDING THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
OF WORKER'S COMPENSATION BENEFITS

FRESNO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today JEFFREY LYNN PUTNEY, 59, of Clovis, California was convicted today of four counts of mail fraud and eighteen counts of wire fraud stemming from his defrauding the United States Postal Service of federal worker's compensation benefits. The guilty verdict was returned by a federal jury in Fresno after a four-day trial before United States District Judge Oliver W. Wanger. PUTNEY'S sentencing date is September 25, 2006.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by the United States Postal Inspection Service.

According to Assistant United States Attorneys Stanley A. Boone and Kirk E. Sherriff, who prosecuted the case, the evidence introduced at trial showed that in May 1998 the defendant submitted a claim for federal worker's compensation benefits, claiming that back and leg injuries arising from his work for the U.S. Postal Service had caused him to be totally disabled. He claimed that his total disability prevented him from working for the U.S. Postal Service in any capacity. The defendant began receiving federal worker's compensation benefits in 1998 and thereafter never returned to work.

The evidence showed that in 1999 the defendant was videotaped loading and unloading a moving truck at his Clovis, California and Carrollton, Ohio residences. The defendant was filmed lifting numerous heavy items. The items moved included cabinets, a refrigerator, a slot machine, additional furniture, and other heavy objects. The evidence also showed that five days after a knee surgery which the defendant claimed caused him to be physically unable to undertake any job rehabilitation training, the defendant was videotaped hand washing his SUV and walking around without need of any assistance device. In March 2002, at a time when the defendant claimed he was debilitated to the point of requiring a walker and needing home attendant care for basic personal functions, the defendant was videotaped working in his yard without assistance, climbing a ladder, pruning trees, and installing roof gutters on his house.

According to United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott, "The federal government takes seriously those individuals who defraud the United States of federal worker's compensation benefits, and will vigorously pursue individuals who commit such fraud."

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